

## Message Text

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47

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

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OMB-01 TRSE-00 /105 W

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O R 300941 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2748

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6726

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, TH

SUBJECT: THANAT ALLEGATIONS RE 1962 U. S. MILITARY INTRODUCTION

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE FORWARDS TEXT OF APRIL 30 BANGKOK NATION ARTICLE REPORTING ALLEGATION BY EX-FOREIGN MINISTER THANAT KHOMAN THAT USG " LIED" IN ANNOUNCING THAT DISPATCH U. S. MARINES TO THAILAND IN 1962 WAS AT REQUEST OF RTG. ACTION REQUESTED: RECONSTRUCTION OF NEGOTIATION OF ANNOUNCEMENT ON INTRODUCTION MARINES IN 1962 AND DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON RESPONSE TO PRESS QUERIES. END SUMMARY.

2. THERE FOLLOWS FULL TEXT FRONT PAGE STORY APRIL 30 BANGKOK NATION HEADLINED QUOTE ' MARINE PACT' REVEALED-- U. S. LIED TO GAIN MILITARY FOOTHOLD HERE, SAYS THANAT. UNQUOTE.

3. BEGIN TEXT: FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER THANAT KHOMAN, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHO IS CHAMPIONING A CAMPAIGN FOR A TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN FORCES FROM THAILAND, HAS DISCLOSED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT THE US GOVERNMENT UNDER PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY LIED IN A WASHINGTON STATEMENT 12 YEARS AGO THAT THE DISPATCH OF MARINE TROOPS TO THAILAND WAS " AT THE THAI

GOVERNMENT' S REQUEST."

MR. THANAT, WHO WAS FOREIGN MINISTER AT THAT TIME UNDER THE PREMIERSHIP OF FIELD MARSHAL SARIT THANARAT, SAID AFTER THE 10 HOUR TENSE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE THEN US AMBASSADOR TO THAILAND, MR. KENNETH YOUNG, MARSHAL SARIT AND HIMSELF STRESSED THAT THE US GOVERNMENT MUST ISSUE A STATEMENT MAKING IT CLEAR THAT THE SENDING OF MARINES TO THAILAND WAS " AT THE REQUEST OF THE US GOVERNMENT."

" BUT WHEN THE WHITE HOUSE ISSUED A STATEMENT, IT SAID THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED FOR THE AMERICAN MARINES TO PROTECT THAILAND-- WHICH WAS CONTRARY TO THE FACTS," MR. THANAT SAYS IN AN ARTICLE IN THE LATEST ISSUE OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW WHICH GOES ON SALE TODAY.

THE ARTICLE, ENTITLED " PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN THAILAND THAILAND' S FOREIGN POLICY," SAYS THE THAI GOVERNMENT AT THAT TIME WAS INITIALLY RELUCTANT TO ACCOMMODATE THE US MARINES IN THAILAND " BECAUSE THE UNITS WERE NOT AIMED AT PROTECTING LAOS OR REPULSING THE COMMUNIST FORCES THERE. THEY WERE SENT HERE SIMPLY TO CONTAIN THE COMMUNISTS IN LAOS AND TO WARN AGAINST THEIR MOVING TOO CLOSE TO THAILAND."

MR. THANAT SAID SEATO COULD NOT ACT TO HELP LAOS AT THAT TIME " BECAUSE SOME MEMBER COUNTRIES WERE NOT READY TO JOIN IN."

THE MARINES WERE THE FIRST US MILITARY FORCE TO BE BASED ON THAI SOIL.

THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO DISCLOSED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF BASES IN NAKHON RATCHASIMA, TAKHLI, UDON THANI, NAKHON PHANOM " AND OTHERS" BY THE AMERICANS WAS KEPT CONFIDENTIAL

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A TOTAL SECRET FROM THE THAI CABINET " INCLUDING MYSELF AS FOREIGN MINISTER." ONLY A HANDFUL OF TOP MILITARY LEADERS WERE INFORMED ABOUT IT, HE SAYS.

MR. THANAT SAYS HE THEN ADVISED THE GOVERNMENT THAT SUCH A SECRECY- SHROUDED PRACTICE WAS " IMPROPER AND WRONG" SINCE SUCH AN IMPORTANT MOVE SHOULD COME UNDER THE COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CABINET.

" THIS POINT WAS WELL TAKEN GENERALLY AND THAT' S WHY WHEN THE US REQUESTED PERMISSION TO BUILD AND USE THE BIGGEST BASE IN ASIA, U- TAPAO, CABINET ASSIGNED THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO DRAFT AN AGREEMENT WITH THE US ON THE MATTER." THE AGREEMENT EMERGED IN THE FORM OF A JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT SIX YEARS AGO.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT, MR. THANAT SAYS, MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ALLOWED TO USE THE U- TAPAO BASE FOR THE PERIOD OF THE VIETNAM WAR ONLY. " NOW THAT THE US, NORTH VIETNAM, SOUTH VIETNAM AND THE VIETCONG HAVE SIGNED A PEACE AGREEMENT, THE U - TAPAO AGREEMENT SHOULD HAVE EXPIRED," HE SAYS.

MR. HTANAT NOTED THAT A RECENT STATEMENT FROM THE US SAID THAILAND HAD AGREED TO EXTEND THE PERMISSION.

" BUT THERE IS NO APPARENT EVIDENCE ON WHAT CONDITIONS AND FOR HOW LONG THE EXTENSION WILL BE. AS FAR AS IS KNOWN, THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO THAT EFFECT."

HE RECALLS THAT THREE YEARS AFTER THE AMERICAN MARINES WERE SENT IN, THE US GOVERNMENT AGAIN REQUESTED THAT ANOTHER NEW MARINE UNIT BE BROUGHT IN ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE SITUATION IN LAOS IS INSECURE. WHEN THE SITUATION IMPROVED, HE SOUGHT WITHDRAWAL OF THE AMERICAN TROOPS FROM THAILAND.

" BUT THIS TIME IT WAS DIFFERENT FOR THE FIRST WITHDRAWAL. THE AMERICANS BARGAINED FOR THE CONTINUED CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESENCE OF THEIR MILITARY ENGINEERING CORPS AFTER THE MARINES WERE PULLED OUT IN ORDER TO BUILD A HIGHWAY FROM SATTAPHI AND KABINBURI. THAILAND AGREED TO THE REQUEST BECAUSE IT WAS A NEW HIGHWAY WHICH WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY AND MILITARY PURPOSES," MR. THANAT SAYS.

THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER, WHO LOST HIS MINISTERSHIP AFTER THE NOVEMBER 17, 1971 COUP, ADMITS THAT THERE ARE SOME, IF LIMITED, BENEFITS FOR HAVING FOREIGN TROOPS IN THAILAND. BUT HE STRONGLY ARGUED THAT THE DISADVANTAGES OUTWEIGH THE ADVANTAGES.

" THE FACT THAT WE AGREED TO ALLOW FOREIGN TROOPS IN THE COUNTRY TO CARRY OUT A WAR MAY BE A FACTOR IN BRINGING WAR INTO OUR COUNTRY WITHOUT ANY POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TO THE EXTENT THAT THE AMERICANS USED TO OFFER US," HE SAID.

HE SAYS IT WAS PROVED THAT THE UNITED STATES, DESPITE ITS OVERWHELMING AIR POWER AND SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT, COULD NOT FORCE THE COMMUNIST TO SURRENDER.

" MODERN WEAPONS ARE OF LITTLE IMPACT IN SUCH A WAR. WHEN THE US FAILED IN VIETNAM AND HAD TO RESORT TO POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS, WHY DID THEY THEN MOVE

THE WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT TO THAILAND?

HE ADDS: " WHAT WILL THAILAND BENEFIT FROM THIS-- EX-CEPT THAT WE WILL BE MADE A MORE CONSPICUOUS TARGET FOR THE COMMUNISTS WHO, WHEN FREED FROM THE WAR IN VIETNAM, MAY NOW ATTACK US IN FULL SWING.

MR. THANAT ALSO CHARGES THAT THE TRANSFER OF AMERICAN AIR FORCE AND GROUND TROOPS FROM VIETNAM TO THAILAND IS IN VIOLATION OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S OWN POLICY THAT THE US WILL PULL OUT OF VIETNAM AND THE ASIAN MAINLAND AND WILL NOT ENGAGE IN ANY WAR IN THE REGION AGAIN.

" IT IS CLEAR, " MR. THANAT CONTINUES, " THAT THE FOREIGN TROOPS ARE HERE NOT TO PROTECT THAILAND. WHAT THEY ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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LOOKING AFTER IS THEIR OWN INTERESTS."

THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN THAILAND, HE SAYS, WILL BRING ABOUT INFILTRATION AND MAY LEAD TO OTHER UNFAVORABLE CONSEQUENCES SUCH AS DRUG TRAFFICKING, CORRUPTION AND EVENTUALLY MAY PROMOTE AND SUPPORT " MILITARY DOMOCRACY" AND OTHER SYSTEMS WHICH ARE AGAINST LIBERAL SYSTEMS. END TEXT.

4. IN LONG VITRILOC PAGE 2 COLUMN IN SAME EDITION VICTOR ANANT WRITING UNDER HEADLINE QUOTE DR. THANAT DRAMATICALLY NAILS AN AMERICAN LIE UNQUOTE: MAKES FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THAT THANAT TOLD HIM THAT PERMISSION FOR US USE OF THAI BASES WAS ONLY FOR DURATION OF VIETNAM WAR.

B. THAT TRANSLATION OF TITLE OF THANAT'S ARTICLE IN SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW IS " FOREIGN DEVIL SOLDIERS AND THE FUTURE OF THAI FOREIGN POLICY."

C. THAT IN THE ARTICLE THANAT " REVEALS IN DETAIL THE INCH BY INCH DECEITFULNESS, INTRIGUE, CORRUPTION, AND, FINALLY, SHEER DISREGARD FOR THAI SOVEREIGNTY BY THE US IN ACQUIRING BASES IN THAILAND AND VIOLATING THAT HOSPITALITY."

D. AFTER REITERATING THANAT'S VERSION OF MARINES IN 1962, THANAT ENDS WITH THIS PARA: QUOTE DOUBLE DEALING? DRAM

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 07 MAY 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 APR 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 NOV 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <28-Nov-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <20-Dec-2001 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980205  
**Subject:** THANAT ALLEGATIONS RE 196 2 U. S. MILITARY INTRODUCTION  
**TAGS:** MOPS, PFOR, TH  
**To:** STATE INFO VIENTIANE  
**CINCPAC**  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005